IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE, ANDHRA PRADESH
AT HYDERABAD

(Special Original Jurisdiction)

TUESDAY, THE TWENTY NINETH DAY OF JUNE
TWO THOUSAND AND FOUR

PRESENT
THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE N.V. RAMANA

WRIT PETITION NO : 10802 of 2004

Between:

P. Sumanth Reddy, S/o. Konda Reddy, R/o. 1-9-296, Modern Towers, Flat No. 405, Phase-II, Vidyanagar, Hyderabad.

..... PETITIONER

AND

Regional Pass Port Officer, Training its Office at Clock Towers, Near Prashant Talkies, Secunderabad.

.....RESPONDENT

Petition under Article 226 of the constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the Affidavit filed herein the High Court will be pleased to issue any Writ, order or direction more particularly one in the nature of Writ of Mandamus declaring the action of the respondent in not making correction in the date of birth portion of the petitioner pass Port No. A 2171992 is illegal, arbitrary and consequently direct the respondent to enter correct date of birth in the passport No. A 217192 of the Petitioner as per educational certificates and issue the same.

For the Petitioner: MR. K. RAJENDER REDDY, Advocate

For the Respondent: MR. A. RAJASEKHAR REDDY, Central Govt. SC

The Court at the admission stage made the following :

ORDER:

Heard the learned counsel for the petitioner and the learned Standing Counsel for the Central Government for the respondent-Passport Authority.

It is the case of the petitioner that his actual date of birth is 30-01-1981, but in the Passport issued to him by the respondent, his date of birth is wrongly mentioned as 30-01-1971, and that he verified the said mistake recently, and that though he approached the respondent, to alter his date of birth in the Passport and issue fresh passport, the respondent is refusing to correct the same on the ground that they have no power to make correction of date of birth in the Passport. The petitioner, therefore, filed the present writ petition praying to direct the respondent to enter his correct date birth in the passport issued by him, and issue fresh Passport.

It is required to notice that there is no provision under the Passports Act, 1967, which empowers the Regional Passport Officer to correct entries in the Passport. However, pursuant to the judgment of the High Court of Judicature at Bombay, in W.P. No. 1072 of 2000, the Government of India issued instructions/clarifications in Circular dated 18-4-2001, which are to the following effect:

(a) Where an applicant is seeking rectification/correction of a mistake in the entry on date of birth/place of birth in the passport, PIA (Passport Issuing Authority) may after verifying/satisfying himself, effect the correction treating the same as a technical correction.

There is no need for a declaratory order in such cases.

(b) Where a competent authority issuing a birth certificate or an educational board registering a date of birth along with place of birth as valid were to issue any correction or amendment, PIA may effect the necessary amendment in the passport without insisting on a Court Order. As per the provisions of Section 21 of the General Clauses Act, 1997, a competent authority issuing a certificate could also make necessary amendments to the same.

(c) Where the initial entry has been made on the basis of a supportive document issued by one competent authority i.e., school/educational authority and the applicant subsequently requests for a change on the basis of a certificate issued by another competent authority i.e., municipal authorities resulting in conflicting sources of valid proof, the PIA should direct the applicant to obtain a civil order from a competent court of jurisdiction, certifying the valid date of birth/place of birth.

As of today, if any request for correction of date of birth in the Passport is made, the Passport Issuing Authority is required to follow the aforementioned instructions. However, the petitioner has not explained the reasons for delay in approaching the respondent authority for correction of date of birth. As such, the petitioner is directed to file an affidavit before the respondent, explaining the reasons for delay in approaching the Passport Officer for correction of his date of birth in the passport issued to him.

On filing such an affidavit and application for correction of date of birth, the respondent is directed to consider the affidavit in accordance with law and process the application for correction of date of birth after verifying the genuineness or otherwise thereof basing on the documents the petitioner may file in support of his case for change of date of birth, in the light of the aforementioned guidelines, and pass appropriate orders.

With the above directions, the writ petition is disposed of. No costs.

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N.V. RAMANA, J

Date: 29-06-2004

Svv

To

1. Regional Pass Port Officer, Training its Office at Clock Towers, Near Prashant Talkies, Secunderabad.
2. Two CD copies.